

## Romance of Maggie Teyte, the Grand Opera Soprano

Overcome by Pity at Seeing Her Childhood Sweetheart Lying with Severed Right Arm in a British Military Hospital, the Prima Donna Falls on Her Knees Beside the Little Cot and Sobs Out Her Proposal

### LOVE EPIGRAMS BY MAGGIE TEYTE.

WHAT a woman wants is steady love.  
When a woman is loved by two men it is the one who makes the most show who wins her.  
Persons who have great gifts must choose between love and a career. I should choose my career.  
My husband preferred love to a career. Because he neglected his career for me he lost my respect.  
Every woman likes attention.  
I proposed to Lieutenant Robertson. I said: "You've got to."  
That man who loses a woman's respect loses her love.  
My first marriage was the old-fashioned kind—the marriage of dependence.  
My next marriage shall be one of independence.  
I believe in marriage; but I do not believe in being too much married.  
It is better for every woman to marry. It gives her anchorage, and human nature needs anchorage.

By Maggie Teyte.

YES, I shall marry again. It will probably be in May, when I return to England. My fiance is Lieutenant Seymour Robertson, of the English One Hundred and Seventeenth Regiment.

I will tell the story of my romance because it may help some other woman to find her way to the new marriage without undergoing the friction of the old marriage—as I did.

I believe that I would have sometime married Lieutenant Robertson, but I would not have married him so soon had it not been for the war.

He lost his left arm. It was shot away at Ypres. He was invalided home. I met him at a private hospital.

I secured a divorce from my first husband, Monsieur Plummon, because I cherished my independence. When I saw my first sweetheart lying in the hospital cot maimed and, oh, so feeble, I felt within me all the old childish love increase immeasurably. We had been child lovers at Wolverhampton, in Staffordshire.

### I Promise to Marry a Wreck of War.

A great flood of love and pity overwhelmed me. I fell on my knees beside his cot sobbing. "I will marry you," I said.

"What—me, a wreck of war, maimed and useless!" he said, bitterly. "I will not allow it."  
"You've got to," I cried; "You've got to marry me."

And we are going to be married.

But let me go back to that childhood in the Midlands, what is called "The Black Country," and tell you my romance from its beginning. Only I cannot commence at the actual beginning, for it seems that I have always known Seymour Robertson. He is seven years older than I and has a clearer memory of "The Teyte Baby" than I have of "The big Robertson Boy," for his memories began earlier than mine.

But we did talk of what we were going to be when we grew up. I cannot remember when he had not determined to be a lawyer. And it was my intention to become a singer ever since my brother broke down in the middle of a solo. He had a heavy cold and we were all too young. I sat close to the platform, eagerly listening. When his voice wobbled, then stopped, I took up the strain and sang it to the end. No one noticed whence the voice came. They stared at the boy standing there, red and mute, listened to the childish soprano and wondered. That day I resolved to become a public singer.

I went to a convent school, then father took me to the Royal College of Music in London. Sir Hubert Parry, director of the college, refused to teach me. He said I was too young. That was the reason I went to Paris. Jean de Reszke forgave my youth. He taught me. I continued my studies in Paris. I sang at the Opera Comique. I created a part in the new opera, Circe. Had I been accepted as a student in London my life would have flown in a different

channel. I would have met Seymour pegging away at his law. There would have been a better understanding between us. But I carved my success in Paris. And I met Eugene Plummon.

There I stop to ask myself the question: "Why?" And I answer: "Because when a woman is loved by two men it is the man who makes the most show who wins her."

I believed that Seymour Robertson loved me, but he was self-contained, deep in his studies and in establishing his practice of the law. I was in Paris. Mons. Plummon was in Paris. I saw him every day. Every woman likes attention. I married him.

My marriage was only tolerably happy from the first, and it became less successful until it degenerated into a failure. There were two reasons for the unhappy outcome. First, let me remind you, that in some essential respects women are alike. They admire the man who achieves a high place in the world. That is one of the common points

between the Colonel's Lady and the O'Grady person between whom Kipling discovered so much likeness. If a man cannot attain a high place in the world, at least he should convince the woman nearest to his life that he is doing his best to develop his talents.

All persons of great gifts may have to decide between love and a career. I would not hesitate a moment. I should choose a career. But my husband chose love. Instead of attending to the big business of a man's life—making a place for himself—he devoted his time and thoughts to me. For this I soon ceased to respect my husband. When a woman's respect for a man goes her love follows.

That is one reason for the failure of my marriage to Mons. Plummon. Another was his disposition to meddle in my career. I wanted to be let alone. I do not mean literally alone, for every normal human being enjoys companionship. But I did not want dictation.

No woman wants some one always at her elbow saying: "Do this" or "Don't do that." It is ridiculous in this stage of the development of women to promise to obey. It is a form of perjury, for every intelligent woman well knows that she has no intention of rendering obedience to her husband. She will discuss family matters with him. She will follow his suggestions, provided she thinks them as good as or better than hers. That is all.

Mr. Plummon let his own career take care, in great measure, of itself, and meddled with mine. In vain I warned him that he must not interfere with my plans. He objected to my going to America. I insisted. I came. He divorced me with my entire consent. I did not defend the suit. What he said was true. I wished to lead an independent life.



Lieutenant Seymour Robertson, to Whom the Prima Donna Proposed.

she is far away that there is some place that is hers, that there is some one who belongs to her. An anchorage! That is right. An anchorage!  
After my marriage to Mr. Plummon I lived for the most part in Paris. I did not meet my former playmate of "The Black Country" until a year ago last Summer, he met my husband and me. It was very formal. He was most dignified. And yet I knew that he still cared. A woman always knows.  
It was on the eve of the war. He volunteered. He was wounded at Ypres while I was in this country. A friend called me about his injury and said he was being invalided home.

When I sailed from America last Spring I intended to join the workers in the field in France. I volunteered as a visitress, one of those women who goes from one supply store to another and who sees that the necessities are furnished.

That post not being open to me, I sang all Summer at the hospitals. I made up a party of four and we visited the hospitals to cheer the lucky ones—brave fellows who, though they had lost one leg or two legs, one arm or both, counted themselves "lucky" merely to be alive. Often I sang ten or twelve numbers. The boys liked the ballads. Their weak voices joined the choruses.

I with other friends, called on Lieutenant Robertson in his hospital. From that first meeting there was a re-understanding. I took my singers to the hospital and sang there. Often I called without them. My divorce was assured, and the love affair of years before, interrupted by my going to Paris, was renewed.

I had to propose to him, as I have told. I knew he loved me and I saw that he did not intend to ask me to share what he thought was a poor remnant of a life. So I did. I said to him, "You've got to."  
Ours will be what I call an independent marriage. He will not interfere with my career nor I with his. But when the tour is over and



Miss Teyte as Cherubino in "The Marriage of Figaro."

his cases are finished, there will be common ground for meeting.

We will have a home and we will have each other. My wish to be alone will be fulfilled. Aloneness is the artist's right. It is more—it is the woman's right. My stand is the revolt of womanhood. We ask that the form of our life shall be

let alone. The form of our life is the work we have elected to do.

I expect to marry when I return to England in May. My fiance is still in the private hospital, but thank Heaven, he is gaining fast. We will show the world that the new marriage, the independent marriage, will be a success.

### How Wall Paper Affects the Air We Breathe

SURPRISING as it may seem, the condition of the walls, whether covered with paper or whitewashed, has an important effect on a room's ventilation.

This was proved by some recent interesting experiments with two rooms. The walls of one room were covered with a light paper which had become somewhat soiled by the lapse of time. Those of the other were whitewashed.

The results of the experiments showed that the proportion of carbonic acid remaining in the air was appreciably less in the room with the whitewashed walls. Taking into consideration not only this, but the amount of humidity and all the other factors, the ventilation of the whitewashed room was found to be 17 per cent better than that of the one with paper on the walls.

Other parallel experiments were made to ascertain the effect of different methods of ventilation. One pair of experiments shows the effect of opening wide and closing the door once every half hour during a seven-hour period. The ventilation was improved about 10

per cent by this periodical opening of the door.

Other sets of tests compared the effect of taking the air supply to the gas stove from the corridor with taking it from the room itself. The supply of air to the gas stove from the room itself improved the ventilation by about 20 per cent.

In other tests the effect of opening the window flap while the gas stove took its air supply from the room itself was tried, with the result that it was found that the ventilation was thus increased by 74 per cent.

Finally, a series of tests was made in which the vent pipe in the ceiling was opened. This was most effective, the ventilation being increased two and one-half to two and three-quarter times, and in one case even five times. Obviously, this increased ventilation must affect the humidity of, and proportion of carbonic acid in, the room.